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IN THE CLAIMS

We Claim:

1. A method to provide customer warranty support and repair services via a
10 computer network, comprising:
at least a first database accessible via said computer network by a plurality of
customers, said at least one database including a personalized portion for each one of said
plurality of customers that requests warranty support, said personalized portion including
customer data necessary for a manufacturer to provide warranty support of products sold
15 by said manufacturer or manufacturer authorized seller;
at least a second database accessible to a plurality of said manufacturers via said
computer network, including a personalized portion for each one of said plurality of
manufacturers containing warranty information regarding products sold by said
manufacturer or said manufacturer authorized seller; and
20 a warranty administrator interfacing with and supporting both said plurality of
customers and said plurality of manufacturers.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said customer and said seller communicate
electronically with said warranty administrator via an integrated network of
25 electronic devices.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of registering a customer's
method of payment with warranty administrator.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein said customer data is sent to said first database
at the point of sale.
- 30 5. The method of claim 4 wherein said customer data is sent automatically to
said first database when said registered payment method is used.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein said customer data is converted to a unique
identifier.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein said unique identifier is communicated
35 electronically to manufacturer.

- 5 8. The method of claim 2 wherein said customer has a comprehensive household warranty.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein said customer with said comprehensive household warranty can contact the warranty administrator via an integrated
- 10 network of computers such as the Internet.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein said comprehensive household warranty includes concierge service.
- 15 11. The method of claim 10 wherein said concierge service provides a loaner item for said customer while warrantied item is being repaired or replaced.
12. The method of claim 2 wherein said warranty administrator has a home page accessible via the Internet through which customers, manufacturers, service
- 20 providers and shippers may access respective portals.
13. The method of claim 2 wherein said product includes a pre-paid unactivated cash card encoded with product data.
- 25 14. The method of claim 13 wherein said product is registered by transmitting electronically said cash card serial number and said customer data to said warranty administrator from an ATM.
15. The method of claim 13 wherein said product is registered by transmitting
- 30 electronically said cash card's serial number to said warranty administrator.
16. The method of claim 12 wherein said warranty administrator is accessible via a URL.

- 5 17. The method of claim 16 wherein said customer portal includes a personalized home page for each customer that displays warranted products owned by that customer.
- 10 18. The method of claim 17 wherein said warranted products are sortable by a function selected from the group consisting of product location, manufacturer, and warranty expiration date.
- 15 19. The method of claim 18 wherein a highlight bar identifies warranted products requiring repair and a status button electronically links the customer to a customer status page maintained by said warranty administrator utilizing information provided by said service provider.
- 20 20. The method of claim 18 wherein a repair button electronically links said customer to a problem report screen enabling said customer to identify said product and a problem with said product.
- 25 21. The method of claim 20 wherein said problem report screen includes a pop-down window of commonly reported problems for said product.
- 30 22. The method of claim 20 wherein said personalized home page provides additional information to said customer about each said product selected from the group consisting of accessories, insurance, trade-in, disposal, serial number, purchase date, warranty expiration date, warranty service level, warranty territory and said products current value.
23. The method of claim 22 wherein selecting said trade-in electronically links said customer to information regarding said manufacturer's trade-in and upgrade policy and secondary markets.

- 5 24. The method of claim 12 wherein said manufacturer's portal accesses a
personalized manufacturer's home page from which the seller may add
information to said second database, said information including manuals,
promotions, up-grades and accessories related to said manufacturer's
products.
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25. The method of claim 24 wherein said manufacturer's portal includes a
warranty screen whereby said manufacturer may display and maintain
warranty and extended warranty coverage.
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26. The method of claim 25 wherein said manufacturer may obtain warranty
repair insurance from said warranty administrator.
27. The method of claim 25 wherein said manufacturer may electronically retrieve
repair statistics from said warranty administrator.
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28. The method of claim 20 wherein when a customer reports a problem, said
warranty administrator electronically communicates said problem to a service
provider.

- 5 29. A method for repairing a defective product comprising the steps of:
a customer accessing a warranty administrator and notifying said warranty
administrator of said defective product via an integrated network of computers;
said warranty administrator electronically confirming that repair of said defective
product is covered by a valid warranty;
10 said warranty administrator determining if in-home repair, in-service center
repair, or return of said defective product is most appropriate;
said warranty administrator electronically notifying at least one of said
manufacturer, said service center, a part distribution center, and a shipper of
required activities;
15 said warranty administrator ensuring that said product is properly repaired; and
said warranty administrator balancing payments between all involved entities.
- 20 30. The method of claim 22 wherein when in-home repair is appropriate, said
warranty administrator electronically coordinates between said customer, a
service provider engineer and a distribution site in replacement parts are
required.
- 25 31. The method of claim 22 wherein when in-service center repair is appropriate,
said warranty administrator electronically coordinates between said customer,
said service center and said shipper.
- 30 32. The method of claim 24 wherein said shipper electronically transmits shipping
instructions to said customers.
- 35 33. The method of claim 22 wherein when return of said defective product is
appropriate, said warranty administrator electronically coordinates between
said customer, said manufacturer and said shipper.
- 35 34. The method of claim 26 wherein said shipper electronically transmits shipping
instructions to said customers.